

Dolphin

DIGEST

Volume 24, Number 7

SEPTEMBER 30, 1995 (641) \$2.50

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Cox, Marino irreplaceable

They are the heart and soul of the Miami Dolphins, two players who must stay healthy even on the deepest of teams. They are the leaders, the pulse, the straws that stir all of the championship dreams that no longer seem far-fetched.

Dan Marino and Bryan Cox.

There is no disputing the significance of each. Lose a defensive lineman and the Dolphins have another ready to plug in. Lose a receiver and there is a warm body in wait. Lose a cornerback and somehow the team will survive. But Marino and Cox, above everyone else, must stay in one piece.

Marino to lead the offense with his fire and his fireworks, Cox to lead the defense with his tenacity and his toughness. They are more than the building blocks. They are the core.

It is easy, therefore, to understand why an eerie silence interrupted an electric Monday night at Joe Robbie Stadium when, in the span of one quarter, both Cox and Marino went down against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

It was almost as if 70,000-plus fans were all holding their collective breath. Anybody, you knew they were thinking, but Marino and Cox. Anybody.

Well, the Miami Dolphins are alive and well today and clearly in the driver's seat in the AFC because Cox's knee and Marino's chest were bruised, not battered. Cox re-entered the game and finished strong. Marino, who was pounded to the turf by linebacker Greg Lloyd, could have gone back in, but the outcome had already been decided.

The Dolphins, now 3-0 and having beaten in back-to-back games the two teams — New England and Pittsburgh — considered their most serious roadblocks to the Super Bowl, beaten them by a combined score of 43-13, have answered all the doubters.

They are the real deal. A team with a vastly improved defense and an offense that you can almost hear ticking like a time bomb ready to explode. Now look at the schedule following the bye week. At Cincinnati. Home against Indy. At New Orleans. At the Jets. Home against Buffalo. It's easy now to envision an 8-0 record heading into a Sunday night game at San Diego.



ANDY COHEN
EDITOR



Dan Marino's presence in the lineup is absolutely vital to the Dolphins' hopes this year.

Digest Photo/RHONA WISE

A dream? Not anymore.

But somehow, this dream will always come back to Marino and Cox and what they mean to their teammates, what they mean to all these grand expectations. They only mean everything.

And their value was never more evident than in this Monday night game against the Steelers.

First, Marino.

The Steelers did a number on the Dolphins rushing attack. There were no holes, only a bunch of black-and-gold defenders swarming with every snap. It was up to Marino to be the difference.

So Danny Boy, fresh off his 34th birthday, stood fearlessly in the pocket and guided the Dolphins on a couple of short touchdown drives. He flicked his wrist as only he can, frustrating what could be the best pass rush in the NFL. There weren't many big plays, but there were enough of them to get the job done.

When all else fails, there is always Marino. That was the difference in this game. The Dolphins had Marino, the Steelers had Mike Tomczak — or

is it Tom-sack? Call it a mismatch.

And then suddenly he was on the ground, twisting and turning in pain. Every trainer and every doctor employed by the Dolphins was huddled around him in an instant. Lloyd's hit was hard and clean. It was just one of those blindsides where the quarterback is helpless. Marino's release is so quick, he usually doesn't find himself in that situation. But Lloyd is equally quick and Marino was trying to buy an extra second. It could have cost the Dolphins their season.

Fortunately, Marino's body is as tough as his will.

But an interesting thing happened with Marino on the ground — Lloyd walked over to the Dolphins huddle to apologize. The huddle wanted no part of it. Tackle Ron Heller and wide receiver Irving Fryar angrily pointed Lloyd back to his side of the field.

"I told him we don't want to hear what he has to say," Fryar said. "I told him we don't accept apologies when somebody levels Marino."

There is a unity that has engulfed

this team, a unity that was evident at that precise moment, a unity that good teams must have.

"We are all in this together," Fryar said. "I think Lloyd got the message."

And then there is Bryan Cox.

He is not the most talented player on the Dolphins defense. That distinction probably belongs to Troy Vincent or maybe Tim Bowens. But what Cox brings to the table can't be measured in 40 times or vertical leaps.

Cox brings a hunger that seems to be contagious.

What the Dolphins have done this season is unleash that hunger, and the results are a vastly improved defense.

Cox has been turned loose to do what he does best — attack the quarterback. No longer does he read and react. He now stands on the line of scrimmage, chooses a hole, and explodes. Now you see him, now you don't — the worst nightmare for an offensive lineman.

He had only five tackles against the Steelers. Wasn't even credited with a sack. But that doesn't tell the story. What Cox can do, and what he did against the Steelers, was disrupt an entire offense. He was always in position to make a play, whether it be stuffing Bam Morris or harassing Tomczak. There is an energy that surrounds everything he does, an energy that you just don't find anywhere else.

This is why when Cox limped off the field, throwing his helmet in disgust, the focus shifted toward the doctors and trainers — just like it did when Marino went down. Suddenly, the game was secondary.

The knee was examined and massaged. Cox started walking around the sidelines like a caged lion, limping less and less with each step. It was quickly apparent that he would be OK. You could almost hear the crowd exhale.

"I'm a little sore," Cox said, "but it's going to take more than a knock on the knee to get me out of there."

Marino and Cox. So much riding on two extraordinary players.

BYE WEEK ISSUE

This issue, dated Sept. 30, is a two-week issue because of the bye week. It was published a few days later than usual in order to provide the most complete coverage of the Dolphins-Steelers game.

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On the cover ...

Running back Bernie Parmalee scored the Dolphins' first touchdown of the evening in the Monday night showdown against the Steelers when he lunged into the end zone in the second quarter. The score helped the Dolphins improve their record to 3-0 heading into their bye week.

Cover Photo/KEN KEIDEL



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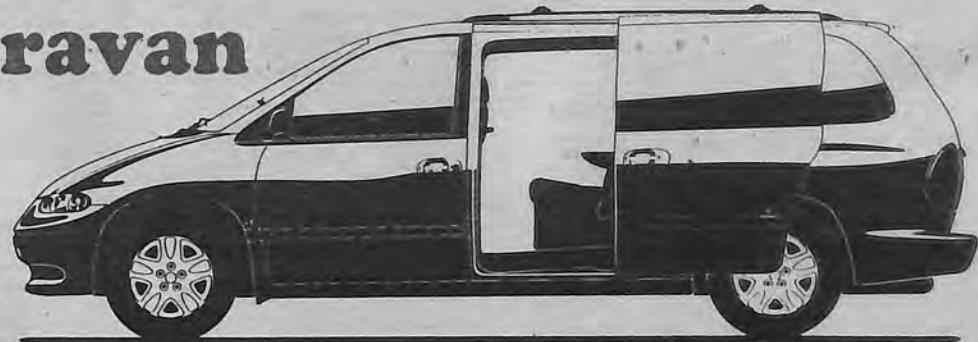
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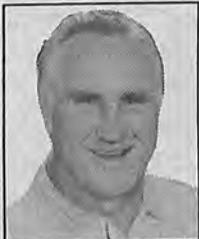


Dodge

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Defense off to sizzling start

I'm so happy to be 3-0 right now and the way that we're playing. You have the feeling that we still could be playing even better than we're playing, especially on offense.



DON SHULA
HEAD COACH

Tom Olivadotti and the defensive coaches deserve a lot of credit for what's happening. We're really coming together as a unit.

When you think about Bryan Cox just being in his second year at inside linebacker, and the two safeties still growing together, and Tim Bowens now in his second year, and then the new players we added in the offseason, it's just pleasing to watch all the pieces fitting together.

It just seems like a different player steps forward every week. J.B. Brown had two interceptions and had a third called back against the Steelers. Somebody had remarked that they went after J.B. in the game up there last year. I don't know if that was true or not, but nobody went after him in this game.

Last year at this time Troy Vincent was on the bench, still trying to recover from knee surgery. Now look at him. He's so sharp out there, you see such a confident football player.

And then you see a relatively unknown player like Calvin Jackson come in and do so many good things against the Steelers. He's such a good story. I guess you could say we have a lot of good stories.



Linebacker Bryan Cox (l.) and defensive tackle Tim Bowens are just two of the reasons the Dolphins defense has played so well in the early going.

Digest Photos/KEN KEIDEL

What the defense did against the Steelers was keep getting good field position for our offense with five takeaways and four quarterback sacks. Aside from the one drive in the fourth quarter, we just didn't make many mistakes.

The feeling I have now about our entire football team is that we have more depth, quality depth, than we've had at any point in recent years. And that's so comforting for a coach to know that you can rotate players and not lose anything performance-wise.

Offensively, we're putting some points on the board, but it seems like we're not scoring as much as we should score.

Now, that was a pretty good defensive football team we were playing in the Pittsburgh Steelers. That front seven of theirs comes at you as hard as any front seven you'll see. They

are relentless and extremely talented. You could just imagine how much better they'd be with Rod Woodson in the lineup.

So you've got to take that into consideration when you look at the performance of our offense against the Steelers. Still, I'd like to see more consistency by our offense.

The running game was excellent our first two games of the season, but we just couldn't get it going against the Steelers. That's something we're going to continue to work on. Eric Green will be a big help in that area.

I decided to start Terry Kirby over Bernie Parmalee. Terry has had a couple of pretty good games heading into the Monday night game and I decided to start him on the basis that he is healthy and feeling good. But Bernie will continue to play a lot and so will Irving Spikes. I wanted to get Spikes into the game against the

Steelers, but the situation never presented itself.

I've never seen Dan Marino more intense and more focused than he is right now. I think it's going to continue to take time for Marino to feel comfortable with some new receivers and a new tight end. That will come in time.

Against the Steelers, we just didn't take advantage of the field position we had. We don't want to settle for field goals, we want to get the touchdown and that's something we're going to be working on.

I didn't see the Greg Lloyd hit on Marino when it happened. I was looking down the field when the hit occurred. But I didn't see any complaints from anybody around that would indicate it was a cheap shot. I just think it was a good, clean hit. Those things happen against a team as physical as the Steelers.

You never know if the bye week is coming at a good time. I know Dan is a little sore from taking that hit from Lloyd, and the extra time should help him. You can't pick and choose when your bye week comes, so we just have to make the most of it. I know that it's nice to go into a bye week feeling good about your team.

I'm looking forward to playing Cincinnati in our next game. That will be exciting for me personally to have the opportunity to coach against my son David again. The Bengals have been playing really well this season.

It's always exciting to think that it has never happened before with another father-son combination and you look across to the other side of the field and that's your son you are coaching against. It was a special feeling the first time I faced him a year ago and I'm sure it will be the same type of feeling again.

But right now I'm just enjoying the way this football team is coming together and a hard-fought victory over the Steelers. It's great to be 3-0!



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MIAMI 23, PITTSBURGH 10

Dolphins make statement

By PAT McMANAMON
Digest Correspondent

The Miami Dolphins defense forced five turnovers and sacked Pittsburgh quarterbacks four times in their 23-10 Monday night win.

But it was a bruised sternum that took on mythical dimensions, a bruised sternum that overshadowed all in an important win that moved Miami to 3-0 and gave the Dolphins an early step up on the home field advantage chase in the AFC playoffs.

That now-renowned sternum belonged to Dan Marino, and it was bruised when Greg Lloyd slammed him to the infield dirt with 2:37 left in the third period and Miami ahead 20-3.

It all happened on first-and-10, when Marino rolled right and Lloyd came untouched around left end. The result was predictable.

"I was throwing, I was off balance and he had a free run at me from 20 yards," Marino said.

Unaware that Lloyd was bearing down on him from behind, Marino hit Mike Williams for a 15-yard completion. But just after the throw, Lloyd grabbed Marino by the shoulder and rode the Dolphins franchise quarterback to the dirt.

Lloyd got up; Marino didn't.

The largest crowd in Joe Robbie Stadium history —

72,874 — didn't know whether to gasp, or vent their anger at Lloyd, who was quoted during the week saying he would knock Marino into next week. There was some question whether Lloyd was talking generally about quarterbacks and actually said "knock them into next week," but it really doesn't matter.

Lloyd almost did it, though the hit was clean.

"The official was right on top of the play," Coach Don Shula said. "There didn't seem to be any complaint from anybody to indicate it was a cheap shot."

"That's as clean a hit as you're going to get in this league," linebacker Bryan Cox said. "The thing I feel kind of sad about is that I was kidding Dan all week about how



Defensive end Trace Armstrong and the Dolphins stood tall against the Steelers in a Monday night showdown between two top AFC contenders at Joe Robbie Stadium.

Digest Photo/RHONA WISE

Lloyd was going to knock him into next week. I don't know if he knocked him into next week, but maybe to Saturday."

"That's part of the game," Marino said. "He hit me hard and clean. He's not a dirty player. What is most important to me is that we're 3-0 heading into the bye week."

Lloyd? He wasn't commenting.

Steelers coach Bill Cowher said Lloyd wasn't trying to hurt Marino, and Cowher said Lloyd tried to see if Marino was OK.

That's when Lloyd lingered near the Dolphins huddle as Miami trainers attended to Marino. Tackle Ron Heller kept waving his arm to Lloyd, telling him to move away. Finally, Irving Fryar ushered Lloyd back to the Steelers side of the ball.

Marino was easygoing after the game, posing for photos with Hootie and the Blowfish and joking with reporters asking questions. But as he lay on the ground, he grabbed a fistful of Lloyd's jersey and said something to the All-Pro linebacker. What did he say?

"I can't remember," Marino said.

Bernie Kosar took over, completed all four of his passes and led Miami to a field goal and a 23-3 lead, while on the sideline Marino strode from player to coach and pointed to his upper chest, the spot of the injury. He went into the locker room briefly for X-rays (which were negative), but ran back on the field before the fourth period ended.

"He was ready to go in if we

needed him," Shula said.

Miami didn't, even though the Steelers, behind backup quarterback Jim Miller (210 yards passing), cut the Dolphins lead to 13 on a 27-yard pass to Ernie Mills.

Marino finished the game 16-for-27 for 183 yards with one touchdown. Tomczak, who had a career-best 343 yards against Miami last season, was ineffective, completing just 11 of 24 for 104 yards, with two interceptions.

Interceptions and turnovers really were the key to the Dolphins win. J.B. Brown had two interceptions, the last in the end zone after Miller had again moved the Steelers. It was sweet revenge for Brown, who heard Tomczak say after last season's game that he had targeted him.

"I think we ended up with five takeaways and four sacks and, aside from that drive in the fourth quarter, played an excellent game," Shula said.

The Dolphins took advantage of three turnovers in the first half, and turned all into points. Two interceptions and a fumble recovery gave Miami excellent field position, and the Dolphins scored on drives of 41, 17 and 21 yards.

The Dolphins scored on three Pete Stoyanovich field goals, Bernie Parmalee's 2-yard touchdown run and a 28-yard pass from Marino to Kirby, who had six receptions for 55 yards.

"It was just a choice route," Marino said. "He had man coverage. We felt early in the week we would be able to make that work."

Kirby beat middle linebacker Chad Brown on the pass. Brown was feeling the effects of a mild concussion that came on the Dolphins' previous possession. Brown was hurt when he and Ray Seals collided violently on a pass rush.

The good news: Marino should be back on Oct. 1 to try throw more touchdown passes, and the defense remains intact. Which is so very important in this season of very high hopes.

"Every time we win a game like this," Brown said, "we make a statement."

Sweet revenge for Brown

By BILL DALEY
Digest Writer

A year ago, Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Mike Tomczak sliced and diced the Miami Dolphins defense up for 343 yards in the Steelers' 16-13 overtime win at Three Rivers Stadium.

Last Monday night, there would be nothing resembling that performance at Joe Robbie Stadium.

This time the Miami defense camped out in Tomczak's face all night and held him to a paltry 104 yards on 11-of-24 passing and two interceptions en route to a 23-10 victory over the Steelers. So awful was Tomczak that he was yanked after three quarters in favor of backup Jim Miller.

As outstanding as all the Dolphins defenders were, one performance definitely stood out and was certainly a subplot to all other subplots during this contest.

J.B. Brown had the kind of night most cornerbacks usually only dream about as he picked off two passes, defensed three more, had five tackles and had what would have been a third interception nullified when Bryan Cox was called offside.

What made it especially sweet for Brown is that Tomczak had singled him out directly after the game last November as somebody the Steelers definitely felt they could go after. Brown quietly stewed for the next 10 months anxiously hoping for a chance to exact some revenge, which he got Monday.

"I really wanted to play well tonight, especially against this guy (Tomczak)," said Brown. "He came out in the papers after that game and said he really wanted to come after me because he felt like I was their weak link. I didn't really appreciate that very much and it hurt my pride, but I got my chance to come out tonight and redeem myself."

Brown didn't waste much time with the redeeming.

On Pittsburgh's opening drive, he picked Tomczak off after Calvin Jackson tipped the pass and returned it 20 yards to the Miami 40,



J.B. Brown (37) had a score to settle with Steelers quarterback Mike Tomczak and he took care of it in spectacular fashion.

setting up the Dolphins' opening drive for a field goal.

On the Steelers' very next possession, Tomczak went Brown's way again and Brown happily greeted him with another pick, returning it deep into Steelers territory. This one was nullified, though, when Cox was offside but by now Brown had definitely sent a message to his pal Mike Tomczak.

"Tomczak ran his mouth last year and you see where it got him this year," said Brown, spewing 10 months worth of venom that had been festering. "I'm not one to usually talk a lot, but it felt really good to do this against him. If he hadn't made the statements he made, it would have been just another good game for me, but this makes it really special."

Ironically, Brown's biggest defensive play of the night, his sec-

ond interception, didn't even come against Tomczak. When Miller came in, he led the Steelers on a furious rally and was on the Miami 8 with 4:08 to go ready to cut the Dolphins lead to six. Brown didn't let it happen.

When Miller tossed up a high arching pass toward Yancey Thigpen in the end zone, Brown went up for the jump ball with Thigpen and tipped it straight up in the air. On his way down to the ground, Brown reached out with his left arm and brought the ball in for the interception, ending any thoughts of a Steelers comeback.

"I didn't say too much during the week," said Brown. "I just figured I'd come out and let my play speak for itself."

That being the case, J.B. Brown did plenty of screaming Monday night.

Quiet reunion for Eric Green

In the end, the big Eric Green versus his former team subplot that everyone was looking for never quite got off the ground.

Signed away from the Pittsburgh Steelers last March as a free agent, Green added a little spice to the impending battle with his former team last month when he aimed some critical comments directly at the Steelers organization, claiming management never really made him feel very comfortable and accepted.

If Green had had his way, he surely would have liked to have caught 10 passes and scored three touchdowns during Miami's 23-10 conquest of the Steelers last Monday night at Joe Robbie Stadium. But, having practiced against the mega-talented Steelers defense for years, he probably knew better.

It would not be a huge numbers night for the Miami offense and at halftime Green's numbers read zero catches, zero yards. It should have read one catch, 12 yards but on a key third-and-10 late in the first quarter, Green went down low for a Dan Marino pass at midfield but couldn't find the handle, forcing the Dolphins to punt.

But on the first play after the second-half kickoff, Marino found the big tight end for an 18-yard gain to the Steelers 47. Two plays later it was Marino-to-Green again for 8 more to the Pittsburgh 28 and it looked like it might be a big second half.

But two catches for 26 yards would be Green's final totals on the night. The remainder of the evening would be spent mainly in the trenches doing what he does best — blocking.

"It was nice, I had a good time out there tonight," said Green. "It was more gratifying for us to come up on the big end of the stick. I don't think we're going to find another defense that's as good as these guys. They really play together and I think we might see them again down the road."

Green was then asked if there was any chatter or talk between himself and his old teammates during the game.

"Not at all," said Green, who wasn't exactly a chatterbox. "We just went out there trying to play hard and do all the right things. I talked to a few guys after the game, they're still my friends but we just had a ballgame tonight, that's it."

— Bill Daley

Game Summary

Pittsburgh	0	3	0	7	—	10
Miami	3	14	3	3	—	23

TEAM STATISTICS

	PIT	MIA
FIRST DOWNS	21	16
Rushing	5	3
Passing	16	12
Penalty	0	1
3RD-DOWN EFFICIENCY	5-16	4-14
4TH-DOWN EFFICIENCY	3-4	0-0
TOTAL NET YARDS	366	256
Total plays	79	56
Average gain	4.6	4.6
NET YARDS RUSHING	85	46
Rushes	22	20
Average per rush	3.9	2.3
NET YARDS PASSING	281	210
Completed-attempted	29-53	21-33
Yards per pass	4.9	5.8
Sacked-yards lost	4-33	3-15
Had intercepted	3	0
PUNTS-AVERAGE	4-37.8	6-41.5
RETURN YARDAGE	129	89
Punts-returns	4-28	2-19
Kickoffs-returns	6-101	3-46
Interceptions-returns	0-0	3-24
PENALTIES-YARDS	11-80	6-45
FUMBLES-LOST	2-2	3-0
TIME OF POSSESSION	31:42	28:18

PLAYER STATISTICS

Missed field goals: Miami (Stoyanovich 52).
Pittsburgh rushing: Morris 14-48, Tomczak 2-13, McAfee 2-10, Williams 3-8, Pegram 1-6.
Miami rushing: Kirby 12-33, Parmalee 8-13.
Pittsburgh passing: Tomczak 11-24 for 104 yards, 2 INT, 0 TD; Miller 18-29 for 210 yards, 1 INT, 1 TD.
Miami passing: Marino 16-27 for 183 yards, 0 INT, 1 TD; Kosar 5-6 for 42 yards, 0 INT, 0 TD.
Pittsburgh receiving: Hastings 10-86, Thigpen 5-63, Barnes 3-48, McAfee 3-30, Johnson 3-23, Mills 2-41, Williams 2-17, Hayes 1-6.
Miami receiving: Kirby 6-55, McDuffie 4-65, Fryar 4-35, Byars 3-15, Green 2-26, M. Williams 1-15, Clark 1-14.

Pittsburgh tackles-assists-sacks (unofficial): Lake 6-2-1/2, Seals 6-0-0, Mays 5-1-0, Lloyd 4-0-0, Kirkland 3-0-0, Williams 3-0-0, Brown 2-1-1/2, Perry 2-0-0, Steed 2-0-0, Greene 1-1-1 1/2, Bell 1-0-0, Figures 1-0-0, Henry 1-0-0, Buckner 0-1-1/2, Barnes 1-0-0, Bruener 0-1-0, Fuller 1-0-0, Gildon 0-1-0, Jones 1-0-0, McAfee 1-0-0.
Miami tackles-assists-sacks (unofficial): Atkins 6-3-0, Singleton 5-2-1, Oliver 6-0-0, J.B. Brown 5-0-0, Coleman 3-2-1/2, Cox 3-2-0, Vincent 4-0-0, Bowens 2-2-1, Jackson 3-0-0, Armstrong 2-1-1, Stewart 4-1-0, Cross 2-0-0, Klingbell 1-1-0, Buckley 0-1-0, Foxx 0-1-1/2, Dotson 2-1-0, Johnson 1-1-0, Kidd 1-0-0, Kopp 1-0-0, Stoyanovich 1-0-0, R. Wilson 1-0-0.
Turnovers — Interceptions: Miami (Brown 2 for 20 yards, Vincent 1 for 4 yards). Fumbles: Pittsburgh (J. Williams, Tomczak). Opponent's fumbles recovered: Miami (Cross, Bowens).
Officials: Referee-Nemmers, Umpire-Conway, Head linesman-Johnson, Line judge-Upson, Back judge-Lovett, Side judge-Speight, Field judge-Orr.
A: 72,874; No-shows: 2,312; T: 3:15.

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DOLPHINS STATISTICS

WON 3, LOST 0

09/03 W 52-14	New York Jets	71,317
09/10 W 20- 3	at New England	60,239
09/18 W 23-10	Pittsburgh	75,186
10/01	at Cincinnati	
10/08	Indianapolis	
10/15	at New Orleans	
10/22	at New York Jets	
10/29	Buffalo	
11/05	at San Diego	
11/12	New England	
11/20	San Francisco	
11/26	at Indianapolis	
12/03	Atlanta	
12/11	Kansas City	
12/17	at Buffalo	
12/24	at St. Louis	

Miami	Opp.
59	56

TOTAL FIRST DOWNS

Rushing	19	14
Passing	33	41
Penalty	7	1
3rd Down: Made/Att	11/33	12/42
3rd Down Pct.	33.3	28.6
4th Down: Made/Att	1/1	4/10
4th Down Pct.	100.0	40.0
POSSESSION AVG.	30:50	29:10

TOTAL NET YARDS

1024	917
Avg. Per Game	341.3
Total Plays	178
Avg. Per Play	5.8

NET YARDS RUSHING

339	188
Avg. Per Game	113.0
Total Rushes	91

NET YARDS PASSING

685	729
Avg. Per Game	228.3

Sacked/Yards Lost

4/22	7/62
Gross Yards	707
Att./Completions	83/53
Completion Pct.	63.9
Had Intercepted	3

PUNTS/AVERAGE

13/42.4	14/38.1
NET PUNTING AVG.	13/35.2

PENALTIES/YARDS

21/153	27/242
FUMBLES/BALL LOST	9/4

TOUCHDOWNS

11	3
Rushing	4
Passing	6
Returns	1
	1

* SCORE BY PERIODS

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	OT	PTS
13	42	24	16	0	95
OPPONENTS	0	20	0	7	0

* SCORING

TD-Ru-Pa-Rt	K-PAT	FG	S	PTS
Stoyanovich	0 0 0 0	11/11	6/ 8	0 29
Fryar	4 0 4 0		0	24
Parmalee	3 3 0 0		0	18
Byars	1 0 1 0		0	6
Kirby	1 0 1 0		0	6
Spikes	1 1 0 0		0	6
Vincent	1 0 0 1		0	6
TEAM	11 4 6 1	11/11	6/ 8	0 95
OPPONENTS	3 0 2 1	3/ 3	2/ 3	0 27

2-Pt. Conversions:

TEAM 0-0, OPPONENTS 0-0

SACKS:

Cox 2.0, Coleman 1.5, Armstrong 1.0,

Bowens 1.0, Singleton 1.0, Foxx 0.5,

TEAM 7.0, OPPONENTS 4.0</



DOLPHINS REPORT CARD

Game No. 3 • Miami 23, Pittsburgh 10

QUARTERBACKS

Dan Marino was harassed by the Steelers defense from the start to his finish. Greg Lloyd hit Marino on the Dolphins' first offensive play and on the one that knocked him out of the game late in the third quarter. He benefited by the turnovers produced by his defense and completed 16 of 27 passes for 183 yards. The 35-yard completion to O.J. McDuffie on the first play of the game got the Dolphins in field goal range and later he hit Terry Kirby with a 28-yard touchdown pass to put the Dolphins ahead 17-3. Bernie Kosar replaced Marino after the second Lloyd hit and completed his first three passes for 31 yards. Kosar showed poise and experience in completing 5 of 6 passes for 42 yards. The two quarterbacks completed 21 of 33 passes for 225 yards, were sacked three times, and did not turn the ball over. Grade: B+

RUNNING BACKS

The Dolphins had little success running the ball on the Steelers' defense. Outside of Kirby's 23-yard run late in the fourth quarter, Miami ball carriers averaged just over 1 yard per attempt. Fullback Keith Byars did not carry the ball and Irving Spikes was not given the opportunity to spell Kirby or Parmalee. The Dolphins had rushed for almost 300 yards in their first two games but fell far short against the Steelers. Grade: C-

RECEIVERS

With the Miami quarterbacks not having much time to pass, nine of 21 completions went to running backs. Kirby was the leading receiver with six receptions for 55 yards and Byars added three for 15 yards. McDuffie and Irving Fryar combined for eight catches for 100 yards.

McDuffie's 35-yard reception on the first offensive play turned out to be the longest play of the night by either team. Fryar continues to be the go-to guy, with three of his four receptions coming on third down. Eric Green was not a part of the pass offense in the first half but did catch two passes from Marino on the first possession of the second half. Mike Williams and Gary Clark contributed with 15- and 14-yard receptions in long-yardage situations. Grade: C+

OFFENSIVE LINE

Protecting Marino against the Pittsburgh blitz was the top priority on Monday night. That philosophy did not help the running game and Marino came close to serious injury anyway. The run blocking was not good, as many plays went for negative yardage. The pass protection against the blitz was adequate most of the night and when the Steelers chose to rush only four, the protection was rock solid. The Miami quarterbacks were sacked three times for minus-15 yards. The competition was severe and the line held its own in the victory. Grade: B

DEFENSIVE LINE

The Steelers tried hard to run the football and ended up averaging almost 4 yards per attempt. But turnovers caused them to fall behind, forcing Pittsburgh to throw the football. Marco Coleman had a strong game, getting good pressure on the quarterback. He finished with five tackles and combined with linebacker Dion Foxx for a sack. Tim Bowens and Chuck Klingbeil did a good job against the inside running. Bowens and Trace Armstrong each had one of the four Miami sacks. Armstrong continued as the Dolphins' best pass rusher, forcing a fumble on his sack, which was recovered by Jeff Cross. Grade: A

LINEBACKERS

Chris Singleton had one sack and forced a fumble, and was in on seven tackles. Bryan Cox missed some time with a minor knee injury but still had five tackles. The Dolphins played most of the second half with five and six defensive backs; thus Dwight Hollier and Aubrey Beavers got few chances to play. The linebacking continued to be excellent against the run and the pass. Grade: A

DEFENSIVE BACKS

The biggest stars of the Miami win came from this line of defense. J.B. Brown made two interceptions; one got the Dolphins the lead and the other preserved the victory. Troy Vincent continued his march to the Pro Bowl and his first-quarter interception was quickly turned into a touchdown and a 10-0 lead. Calvin Jackson, in his second game since coming up from the practice squad and replacing the injured Frankie Smith, tipped one pass that was intercepted and had three tackles. Gene Atkins was in on a team-leading nine tackles and helped intimidate with several big hits. Louis Oliver played extensively in the deep secondary in the second half and contributed six tackles. Michael Stewart continued his fine play in limiting the tight end to minimal receptions and helping stop the run. Grade: A

SPECIAL TEAMS

Pete Stoyanovich made 3 of 4 field goal attempts, missing only from 52 yards out, and kicked off better than in the two previous games. John Kidd averaged 41.5 yards per punt and downed one inside the 20-yard line. The Miami coverage teams continued their impressive play. Dewayne Dotson was the star this week, making two tackles and helping on another. Grade: A-
— Tom Curtis

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\$10 ea. - Gene Atkins, Aubrey Beavers, Jeff Cross, Bernie Kosar, Billy Milner,

Mercury Morris, Garo Yepremian, Louis Oliver

\$12 ea. Tim Bowens, Keith Sims, Terry Kirby, Eric Green (practice)

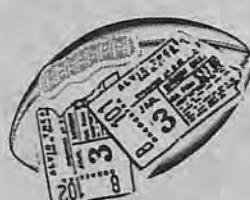
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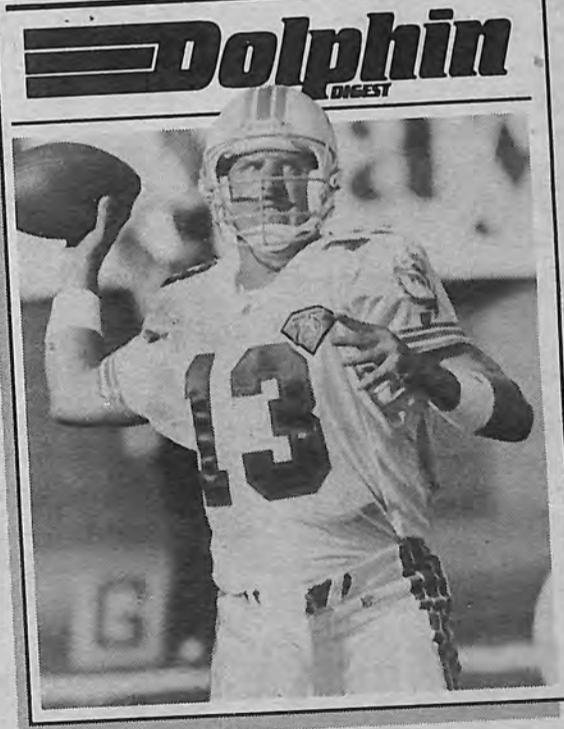
DOLPHIN DIGEST PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL

J.B. BROWN**CORNERBACK**

Cornerback J.B. Brown is the *Dolphin Digest* Player of the Week for his performance last Monday night against the Pittsburgh Steelers. Brown had one of his finest games: He intercepted two passes and had a third interception nullified by a penalty. He also knocked away several passes and was in on five tackles.

Also considered for Player of the Week honors were linebacker Bryan Cox, defensive tackle Tim Bowens and quarterback Dan Marino.

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DOLPHIN DATA

Knee surgery for Don Shula

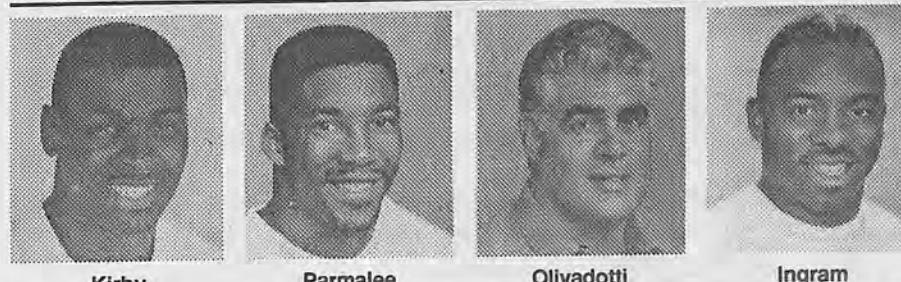
Coach **Don Shula** had one more injury to worry about last week — his own.

For the second consecutive year, Shula underwent surgery. This time to repair torn cartilage in his right knee. The procedure was performed by team physician **Dr. Dan Kanell**.

Shula didn't miss any practice time, but he was walking around on crutches. He was not expected to need a golf cart — like he did last year following an Achilles tendon injury — when the Dolphins return to action Oct. 1 at Cincinnati.

LINEUP JUGGLING: The Dolphins made a switch in the starting lineup for the Monday night game against Pittsburgh, with **Terry Kirby** replacing **Bernie Parmalee** at running back. The switch came after Parmalee lost three fumbles in the first two weeks, but Shula didn't say that was the reason for the switch. He also said he would continue to alternate Kirby, Parmalee and **Irving Spikes**. "Even though I made some mistakes the first two games, it really doesn't matter who (starts)," Parmalee said. "There's no bitter feeling. It's a team sport. I want us to keep winning."

JUST FOR KICKS: The Dolphins, not overly thrilled with **Pete Stoyanovich's** kickoffs in the early going, brought in free agent kicker **Joe Nedney** for a look. The feeling was the Dolphins would like to have a kickoff



Kirby

Parmalee

Olivadotti

Ingram

specialist on the roster, possibly as early as the Oct. 1 game at Cincinnati.

TALL TALES: It might not mean much, but the Dolphins entered the 1995 season with the tallest roster in the AFC. The Dolphins' opening-day roster measured an average of 6-2.7, tops in the AFC and second in the NFL to Carolina's 6-3.3. The Dolphins ranked third in the AFC in average weight (242.1), fourth in average age (27.0) and fourth in average experience (5.1).

GOOD BYE: Here's a good omen with the Dolphins taking the weekend

off for their bye. Miami is 6-0 in games following a bye, with victories over New England (1990), Indianapolis (1991), Cleveland (1992), Buffalo (1993), Indianapolis (1993) and New England (1994). Incidentally, this is nowhere near the earliest the Dolphins have had a bye. In 1992, their bye was switched to the first week in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew.

INACTIVE INFO: Wide receivers **Randal Hill** and **Ricky Sanders** once again highlighted the list of inactive players for the game against Pittsburgh. Also inactive were quar-

terback **Dan McGwire**, cornerback **Frankie Smith**, offensive linemen **Tom McHale** and **Andrew Greene**, and defensive linemen **Ed Hawthorne** and **Norman Hand**.

EX-DOLPHINS SHINE: It was a good day on the field for several former Dolphins players during Week 3. Cleveland defensive back **Stevon Moore** intercepted three passes in a 14-7 victory over Houston; San Diego defensive tackle **Shawn Lee** came up with two sacks in a 27-21 victory over Philadelphia; and Green Bay wide receiver **Mark Ingram** caught a touchdown pass in a 14-6 victory over the New York Giants. On a down note, former Dolphins defensive tackle **Alfred Oglesby** was waived by the Jets.

FOOTBALL FAMILY: Dolphins fans may have noticed a familiar name when Purdue played Notre Dame on national TV two Saturdays ago, that of wide receiver **Kirk Olivadotti**. Yes, he's the son of Dolphins defense coach **Tom Olivadotti**. In Purdue's first two games, Olivadotti had three receptions for 27 yards. Another Big Ten player, Michigan quarterback **Brian Griese**, also has Dolphins bloodlines — he's the son of Hall of Famer **Bob Griese**.

TARKENTON'S TAKE: So what does **Fran Tarkenton** think about his place in the NFL record books being taken? Actually, he's got no problem with it. "I have no regret that **Dan Marino** is breaking my records. I'm glad it's him who is because he has performed magnificently," he said. "If it was a Harvey Schultz breaking them, that might be a different story."

Marino record chase update

Quarterback **Dan Marino** continued to move closer to **Fran Tarkenton's** all-time passing records before being knocked out of the Monday night game against Pittsburgh.

A look at where Marino stands and the estimated record-breaking date (RBD), using his 1995 averages:

Touchdowns: Trails by nine, projected RBD is Nov. 5 at San Diego.

Yards: Trails by 1,204, projected RBD is Nov. 5 at San Diego.

Attempts: Trails by 345, projected RBD is early in the 1996 season.

Completions: Trails by 36, projected RBD is Oct. 15 at New Orleans.

Injury Update ...

The Dolphins got a couple of major scares in the Monday night game against Pittsburgh, but escaped without major damage.

The big news was the injury suffered by quarterback **Dan Marino**, who was nailed by linebacker **Greg Lloyd** in the third quarter.

Marino left the game with a bruised sternum, went in for X-rays (they were negative) and then returned to the sideline. He never went back in the game, but that was mostly because the Dolphins had the game under control.

Linebacker **Bryan Cox**, for his part, briefly left the game with a strained knee. He later returned and finished the game without any problems.

Both Marino and Cox are expected to be back at full strength in plenty of time for the Oct. 1 game at Cincinnati.

Other players injured against the Steelers included safety **Gene Atkins** (bruised right leg), guard **Keith Sims** (strained neck) and offensive tackle **Ethan Albright** (sprained left thumb). None of those injuries were considered serious.

Cornerback **Frankie Smith** missed his second consecutive game because of a hamstring injury suffered in the season opener. His status for the Cincinnati game was to be determined in the week leading up to the game.



Sammie Smith

Former No. 1 pick in trouble with law

Former Dolphins running back **Sammie Smith** was arrested in central Florida on Sept. 14 and charged with intent to distribute cocaine.

The 28-year-old Smith had about 15 pounds of cocaine in his car when nearly 100 law enforcement officials moved in.

Authorities described Smith as the biggest catch in a four-month operation designed to clear the Orlando suburb of Zellwood of cocaine dealers.

Smith was charged with four federal counts of intent to distribute cocaine and appeared before a federal magistrate Sept. 15. If convicted, he could face life in prison.

"Obviously, there are two sides to every story," said defense attorney Wayne Sheaffer. "He is very depressed. The family, his friends and the community at large is rather shocked and dismayed."

Smith, the Dolphins' No. 1 pick in 1989 who played in Miami from 1989-91, has been out of football since 1992 when injuries sidelined him in his first year with the Denver Broncos.

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Coach **Don Shula**. "We never saw any signs of that here with Sammie. You hope he gets it back together."

TRACE'S PLACE

Armstrong fills important role as pass rusher

By CRAIG DOLCH
Digest Correspondent

Trace Armstrong plans on becoming a lawyer in the future. These days, he's busy stating the case for the Miami Dolphins' defense.

The early verdict is in, and the Dolphins have been found guilty of having a much-improved defense. Exhibit A would be the way Armstrong has upgraded the Dolphins' pass rush during the season's first month.

"He's enabled us to put pressure on the quarterback without having to blitz," linebacker Bryan Cox said. "He's been a big addition to this defense."

Not everyone thought that would be the case when the Dolphins traded second- and third-round draft picks to Chicago last April 4 to acquire the 6-foot-4, 265-pound defensive end. Some Dolphins fans thought that was too high a price to pay for a player who has been labeled as a pass-rushing specialist.

Armstrong understands why he was brought to Miami. "It's no secret why they wanted me," he said. "I've shown an ability to sack the quarterback." Indeed, Armstrong had 42 sacks in his six seasons with the Bears, twice reaching double figures.

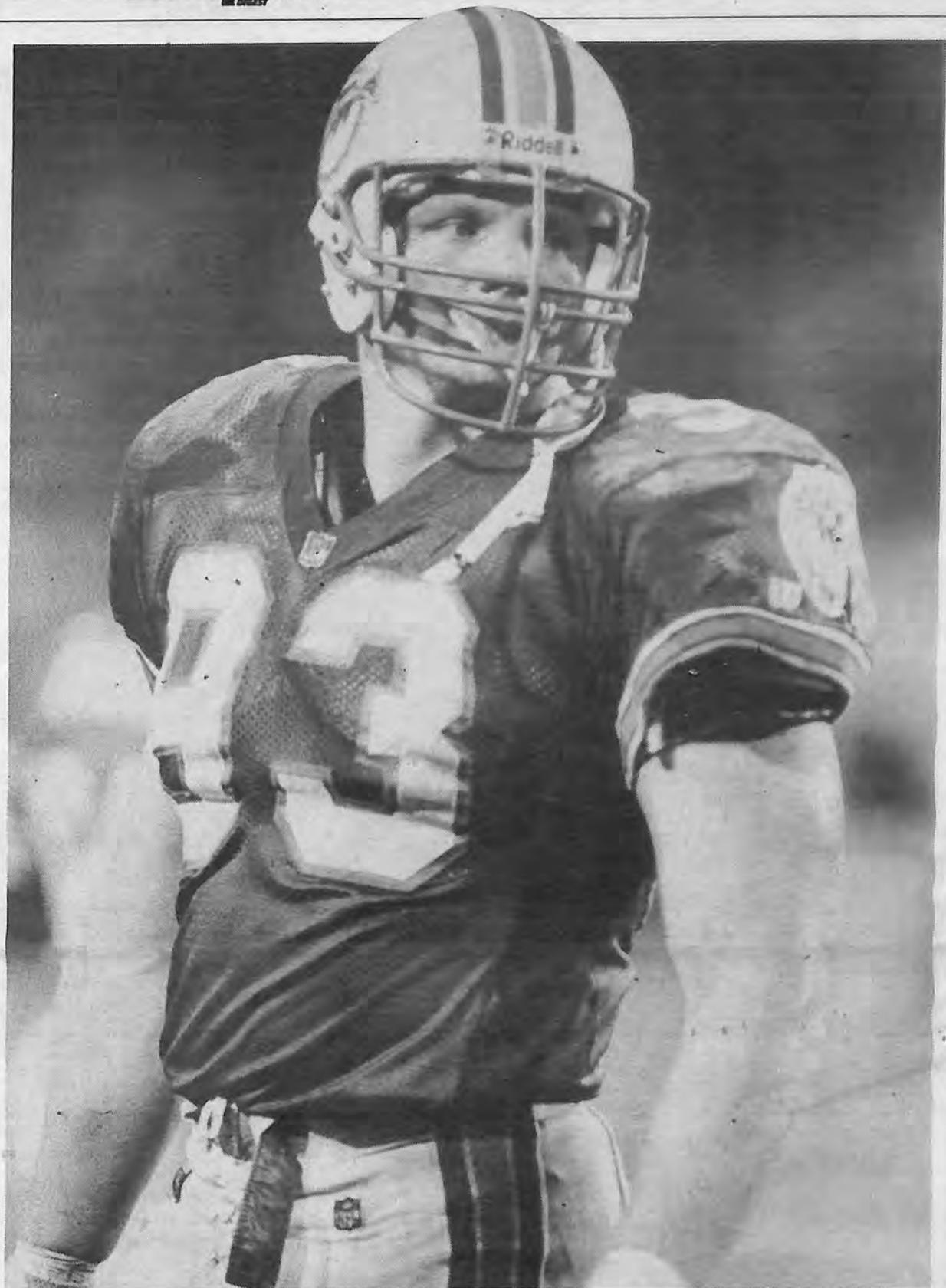
Armstrong, 29, has shown that same ability to get to the quarterback with the Dolphins. He had two sacks in Miami's first three games, and plenty more quarterback pressures.

While offseason acquisitions like tight end Eric Green and receivers Gary Clark and Randal Hill received most of the attention, Armstrong quietly may have been the Dolphins' most important pick-up. Especially considering he has reinforced what was one of the team's biggest weaknesses.

The Dolphins had just 29 sacks last year, which was fewer than only six NFL teams. Jeff Cross, with 9½ sacks, was the only Dolphin to record more than six.

"Trace gives us a chance to do more things because of his experience," Cross said. "He's a guy who has played a lot of games and knows how to win. He gives offenses one more thing to think about."

But mention Armstrong's reputation as a pass rusher and he'll chuckle. He knows it's part-compliment, part-insult — an insinuation he can't play against the run.



Defensive end Trace Armstrong has proven to be one of the Dolphins' top offseason acquisitions so far and his ability to put pressure on the quarterback has been a tremendous help to the defense.

Digest Photo/RHONA WISE

"It just so happens that because of my size, I'm probably a little better against the pass than the run. Thus, you get labeled," Armstrong said.

Armstrong's pass-rusher label bothers Dolphins defensive coach Tom Olivadotti. He believes that view shortchanges Armstrong's talents.

"He's not a pass-rush specialist. He's a football player," Olivadotti said. "I'm not afraid to put him in there in any situation, whether it's an obvious run situation or not. That label is very unfair to Trace, because he's a complete football player."

At least six other teams, including the Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers, shared Olivadotti's opinion. They all tried to make deals for Armstrong when the Bears started shopping him. This amount of interest is the main reason the Dolphins had to give up those two high draft picks.

There were reports that Armstrong wasn't originally happy with the trade. Not so, he said.

While he did want the Dolphins to extend his contract beyond his \$975,000 salary this year — "I don't want to be here one year and then gone" — he understood why the club chose not to. This way, the Dolphins can see Armstrong's worth, knowing they'll be able to keep him simply by matching any other team's offer to the restricted free agent.

Playing for the Dolphins is like coming home for Armstrong, who played his senior year at the University of Florida. Two weeks before the trade, by coincidence he moved his family back to Gainesville, where he's attending law school.

The Dolphins continued to make him feel at home upon his arrival. "A lot of teams treat free agents like an outsider, but this team and this organization has gone out of its way to welcome me with open arms," he said. "They went a

See ARMSTRONG, next page

ARMSTRONG, from preceding page

long way to make me feel comfortable."

Still, when Armstrong came to Miami, he was worried he might have to settle for a backup role behind starters Cross and Marco Coleman. It was not a scenario with which Armstrong was familiar.

"I've been playing organized sports since I was 5, and I've never not been a starter," Armstrong said after the trade. "It would be very strange not to be out there when they call the first-team defense on the field."

Armstrong has since adjusted to the role. Part of the reason is the Dolphins have been using a regular three-man rotation at the two end spots among Armstrong, Cross and Coleman. Armstrong also plays left end in the team's nickel package, allowing Cross to move inside, where he's more effective rushing the passer.

"We don't think of him as a non-starter," Dolphins coach Don Shula said of Armstrong. "We think of him as a guy who is going to play a lot and help us. It gives us a lot more flexibility defensively. When he's in the ballgame, he's just coming. He's tenacious."

Olivadotti also likes the way Armstrong handles himself off the field. It didn't take long for Armstrong, who's very active in the NFL Players Association, to become a presence in the locker room, which

is usually not done by new players.

"He's a professional," Olivadotti said. "He studies tapes and he never whines about anything. He knows what's going on around him. That's why guys like him last that long."

Armstrong says his biggest adjustment is when he takes over for Coleman at right end. That's understandable — Armstrong last played right end his junior year at Arizona State.

He doesn't have any problems dealing with the high expectations or any criticism from those "experts" who believe the Dolphins gave up too much for his services. Armstrong discovered several years ago the best way to deal with possible negative media coverage is to pretend it's not there.

"A few years ago I stopped reading the papers, listening to radio and watching sports on TV, and it's been one of the best things I've ever done," he said. "Chicago is a high-intensity media town, and I just came to the conclusion

that why should I let some guy who doesn't know what he's talking about ruin my day.

"There were times when I would get so mad when someone might say something about me or my teammate, and I would be ready to swat the guy the next time I saw him. It was a drain of energy. It was ridiculous to feel like that."

Armstrong hasn't changed his non-media approach in Miami. Though he's very cooperative with reporters, he says he reads only one paper: *USA Today*.

Armstrong would prefer you wouldn't know that much about him, as well. For instance, he crossed out his formal name on some forms the Dolphins had sent for him to fill out after the trade. Armstrong said nobody needs to know his real name, though he did reveal he goes by "Trace" because he's the third. "You know, uno, dos, tres," he said. For the record, his full name is Raymond Lester Armstrong.

"Trace" might be an appropriate word for the Dolphins' season, if all goes according to plan. It could be the number of times the Dolphins have won a Super Bowl after this season.

"This is a team that has a legitimate shot to win it all, and it's probably the first time in my career I've been in that situation," Armstrong said.

That law degree can wait.

DEALING DOLPHINS

1995 Dolphins who arrived via trades

Player	Previous Team	Traded For
DE Trace Armstrong	Chicago	No. 2 and No. 3 picks
CB Terrell Buckley	Green Bay	Past considerations
WR Irving Fryar	New England	No. 2 and No. 3 picks
WR Mike Williams	Jacksonville	TE Pete Mitchell

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OCT. 13th - 15th**

INCLUDES:

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- 2 Nights Holiday Inn French Quarter
- Game Ticket Terrace Section
- Pre-Game breakfast at famous restaurant
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- VIP Casino Admission + \$250 Bonus Book
- Optional Skybox Upgrade



all rates per person

\$549
dbl. occ. **\$529**
trpl. occ. **\$509**
quad. occ. **\$649**
sgl. occ.

3 night ground package Oct. 13th - 16th

INCLUDES:

- All of the above except air & transfers
- 3 nights Holiday Inn French Quarter

\$339
dbl. occ. **\$329**
trpl. occ. **\$319**
quad. occ. **\$439**
sgl. occ.

**DOLPHINS-CHARGERS VEGAS TOUR
NOVEMBER 2nd - 6th**

INCLUDES:

- R/T Air from Ft. Lauderdale (other cities available)
- 3 nights Tropicana - Las Vegas
- 1 night Town & Country - San Diego
- Ground Transfers Las Vegas & San Diego
- Game Ticket View Section
- All hotel taxes, gratuities, portage
- Pre-Game Tailgate Party



all rates per person

\$699
dbl. occ. **\$679**
trpl. occ. **\$659**
quad. occ. **\$899**
sgl. occ.

**3 night ground package Nov. 3rd - 6th
San Diego Only**

INCLUDES:

- 2 nights Town & Country San Diego plus
- All San Diego Non-air & Vegas inclusions

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sgl. occ. **\$439**
sgl. occ. **\$439**
sgl. occ. **\$439**
sgl. occ.

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\$249*

per person, double occ.
Extra nights: \$60 per person

* Rates shown above all based on 2-night stay - Monday night games require minimum 3-night stay

DATE:	
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Oct. 27-29	Buffalo
Nov. 10-12	New England**
Dec. 1-3	Atlanta
Dec. 9-12	Kansas City

** - Limited space Pittsburgh, New England

\$229*

per person, triple occ.
Extra nights: \$40 per person

INCLUDES:

- 2 or 3 nights Don Shula's Hotel
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- Complimentary Newspaper

\$219*

per person, quad occ.
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per person, single occ.
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19th Annual Dolphin Pre-Season Cruise aboard the Brand-new 70,000 ton **IMAGINATION**

June 22-29, 1996

from Miami to Playa del Carmen & Cozumel, Mexico, Grand Cayman & Ocho Rios
Hosted by dolphin Stars such as Gene Atkins, J.B. Brown, Marco Coleman, Bryan Cox, Irving Fryar, O.J. McDuffie, & Bernie Parmalee • LOW GROUP RATES

CAT.	DESC.	DECK	BROCHURE	GROUP
12	VERANDAH SUITE	UPPER	\$2429	\$2079
11	DEMI-SUITE	VERANDAH	\$2229	\$1839
9	OUTSIDE, TWIN/KING	EMPEROR	\$1849	\$1039
8	OUTSIDE, TWIN/KING	UPPER	\$1799	\$999
7	OUTSIDE, TWIN/KING	MAIN	\$1749	\$979
6	OUTSIDE, TWIN/KING	RIVIERA	\$1719	\$859

All rates per person, dbl. occ. "cruise only" 3rd/4th sharing cabin pays \$419 pp. Port taxes \$109 pp.

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**12th Annual Dolphin Legends
"Aegean Odyssey" Med Cruise
Aboard the luxurious MARCO POLO**

June 19 - July 2, 1996

Athens to Delos, Mykonos, Crete, Santorini, Rhodes, Ephesus, Mt. Athos, Troy & Istanbul
Hosted by Dolphin Legends

CAT.	DESCRIPTION	GROUP RATE
DS	DELUXE SUITE, UPPER DECK	\$4895
JS	JUNIOR SUITE, SKY, MAIN DECK	\$3865
A	DELUXE OUTSIDE, SITTING AREA	\$3325
C	SUPERIOR OUTSIDE, UPPER DECKS	\$2560
E	STANDARD OUTSIDE, BALI DECK	\$2325
H	SUPERIOR INSIDE, PROMENADE DECK	\$1995
K	STANDARD INSIDE, PACIFIC DECK	\$1875

All rates per person, dbl. occ. Add \$595 pp. for air.
Port fees - \$195 pp. plus U.S. Departure Tax

Includes 2 nights in Athens and
3 nights in Istanbul!!

**14th Annual Quarterback Legends
Cruise Aboard Celebrity's 5-star**

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May 31 - June 7, 1996

Inside Passage from Vancouver to Ketchikan, Juneau, Tracy Arm, Skagway, Haines, Misty Fjords

Hosted by NFL Legends

Johnny Unitas, Otto Graham and Earl Morrall!!

CAT.	DESCRIPTION	BROCHURE	GROUP
2	DELUXE SUITE, ATLANTIC DECK	\$3895	\$1949
3	DELUXE OUTSIDE, HIGH DECKS	\$2675	\$1340
4	OUTSIDE, MIDDLE DECKS	\$2475	\$1218
5	OUTSIDE, EUROPA DECKS	\$2425	\$1189
8	OUTSIDE, LOWER-FRONT DECKS	\$2389	\$1099
10	INSIDE, EUROPA DECK	\$1899	\$979

All rates per person, dbl. occ. "cruise only" Port fees - \$118.50 pp.
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FAMILY AFFAIR, PART II

They meet again.

For the second time in two seasons, Don Shula gets to coach against his oldest son, David, in a family affair that continues to be unprecedented in the NFL.

A year ago much ballyhoo surrounded Shula Bowl I and the Dolphins walked away with a 23-7 victory at Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium. On Sunday, Oct. 1, the sequel will be held, also at Riverfront Stadium.

In truth, it is a game neither Don nor David would prefer to play. It leaves both feeling uneasy — Don because he doesn't want to make life any more difficult for his son and David because of the ties he has had with the Dolphins through the years.

Both will try to tune the other out on game day, but both know that is nearly impossible. They talk several times a week during the season. Sometimes they compare notes. Other times they offer one another advice. Don roots for David every week. David roots for Don every week.

Every game, except this game.

"The Dolphins have an excellent team once again this season," David says. "They'll provide a tough test for our football team."



Don and David Shula were all smiles after their historic meeting last year, but it's not necessarily a game either of them really relishes.

"Cincinnati is much-improved this season," Don says. "They've had some tough breaks because of injuries, but you can just see the improvement."

They'll both say the right things. But deep inside who knows what they're really feeling?

The mind wanders back through the years to when David was a

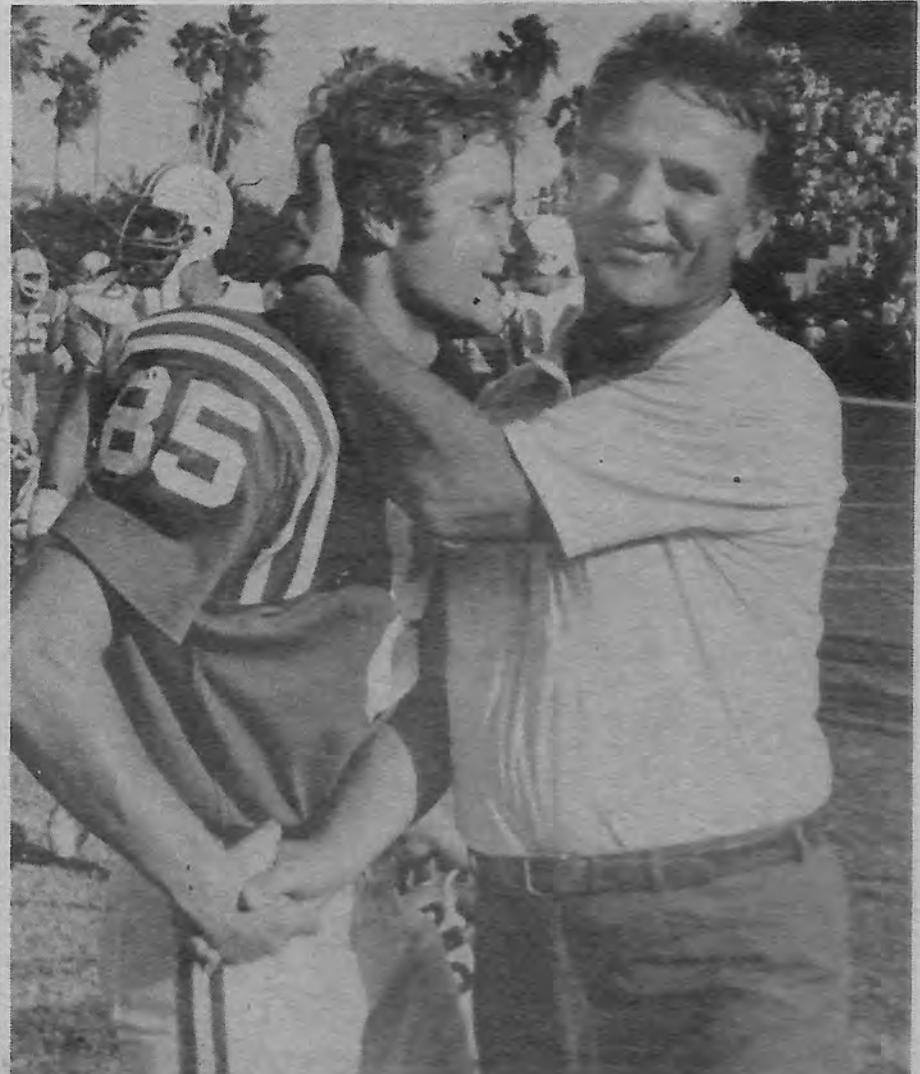
water boy for the Dolphins. Who ever thought it would come to this?

Father vs. Son. Shula Bowl II. You just know the emotions will be running high.



Digest Photos/KEN KEIDEL

David and Don Shula have spent a lot of time together in the NFL, whether it was when David was an assistant with the Dolphins or playing wide receiver for the Baltimore Colts.



Digest Photo/DAVE GROSS



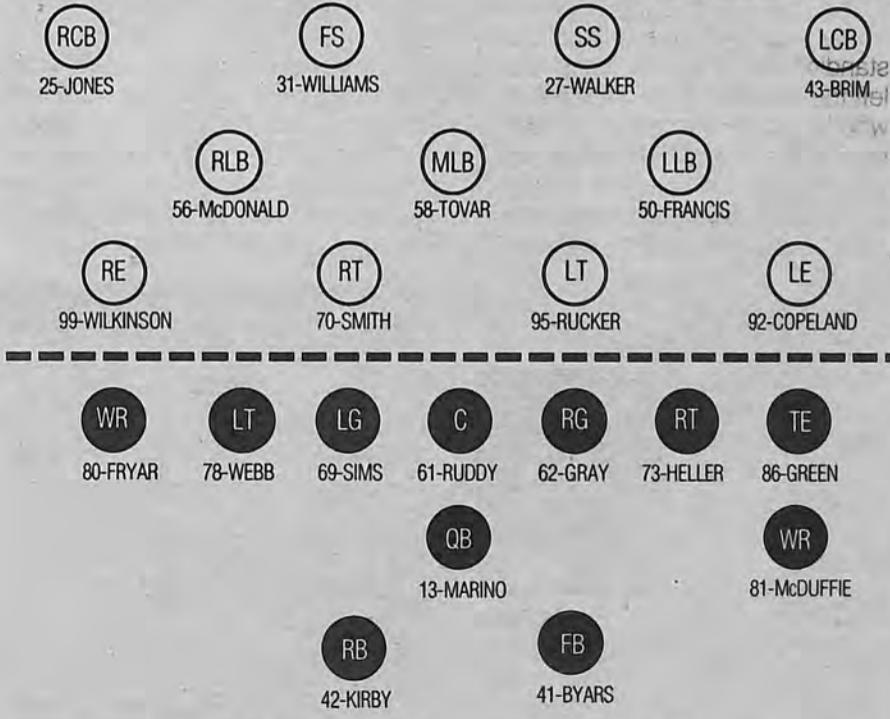
Miami Dolphins

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Exp.	College
10	Pete Stoyanovich	PK	5-11	195	7	Indiana
11	Dan McGwire	QB	6-8	240	5	San Diego State
13	Dan Marino	QB	6-4	224	12	Pittsburgh
17	John Kidd	P	6-3	214	12	Northwestern
19	Bernie Kosar	QB	6-5	214	11	Miami
23	Troy Vincent	CB	6-0	195	4	Wisconsin
24	Pat Johnson	S	6-1	204	1	Purdue
25	Louis Oliver	S	6-2	224	7	Florida
27	Terrell Buckley	CB	5-9	176	4	Florida State
28	Gene Atkins	S	5-11	201	9	Florida A&M
29	Frankie Smith	CB	5-9	182	3	Baylor
30	Bernie Parmalee	RB	5-11	196	4	Ball State
31	Sean Hill	CB	5-10	179	2	Montana State
35	Michael Stewart	S	5-10	202	9	Fresno State
37	J.B. Brown	CB	6-0	191	7	Maryland
40	Irving Spikes	RB	5-8	206	2	N.E. Louisiana
41	Keith Byars	FB	6-1	255	10	Ohio State
42	Terry Kirby	RB	6-1	218	3	Virginia
48	Lee McClinton	FB	5-11	252	R	New Hampshire
49	Robert Wilson	FB	6-0	255	3	Texas A&M
50	Dwight Hollier	LB	6-2	250	4	North Carolina
51	Bryan Cox	LB	6-4	248	5	Western Illinois
52	Jeff Kopp	LB	6-3	243	R	Southern Cal
53	Aubrey Beavers	LB	6-3	231	2	Oklahoma
55	Chris Singleton	LB	6-2	246	6	Arizona
57	Dion Foxx	LB	6-3	250	2	James Madison
59	Dewayne Dotson	LB	6-1	256	1	Mississippi
60	Bert Weidner	G	6-2	295	6	Kent State
61	Tim Ruddy	C	6-3	290	2	Notre Dame
62	Chris Gray	G	6-4	292	3	Auburn
68	Andrew Greene	G	6-3	304	R	Indiana
69	Keith Sims	G	6-3	309	6	Iowa State
71	Ethan Albright	T	6-5	292	1	North Carolina
72	Tom McHale	OL	6-4	290	9	Cornell
73	Ron Heller	T	6-6	290	12	Penn State
74	Ed Hawthorne	NT	6-1	305	R	Minnesota
78	Richmond Webb	T	6-6	303	6	Texas A&M
79	Billy Milner	T	6-5	293	R	Houston
80	Irving Fryar	WR	6-0	200	12	Nebraska
81	O.J. McDuffie	WR	5-10	188	3	Penn State
83	Rickey Sanders	WR	5-11	185	10	SW Texas State
84	Gary Clark	WR	5-9	175	11	James Madison
85	Ronnie Williams	TE	6-3	258	3	Oklahoma State
86	Eric Green	TE	6-5	280	6	Liberty
87	Mike Williams	WR	6-0	183	5	Northwestern
89	Randal Hill	WR	5-10	180	5	Miami (Fla.)
90	Marco Coleman	DE	6-3	267	4	Georgia Tech
91	Jeff Cross	DE	6-4	280	8	Missouri
93	Trace Armstrong	DE	6-4	260	7	Florida
94	Steve Emtman	DT	6-4	284	4	Washington
95	Tim Bowens	DT	6-4	310	2	Mississippi
96	Norman Hand	DT	6-3	329	R	Mississippi
99	Chuck Klingbeil	NT	6-1	288	5	Northern Michigan

Cincinnati Bengals

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Exp.	College
4	Erik Wilhelm	QB	6-3	217	6	Oregon State
7	David Klingler	QB	6-2	205	4	Houston
8	Jeff Blake	QB	6-0	202	4	East Carolina
9	Doug Pelfrey	K	5-11	185	3	Kentucky
10	John Walsh	QB	6-4	215	R	BYU
11	Lee Johnson	P/K	6-2	200	11	BYU
21	Eric Bienviemy	RB	5-7	198	5	Colorado
23	Corey Sawyer	CB	5-11	171	2	Florida State
24	Roger Jones	CB	5-9	175	5	Tennessee State
25	Rod Jones	CB	6-0	185	10	SMU
27	Bracey Walker	S	5-10	200	2	North Carolina
28	Harold Green	RB	6-2	222	6	South Carolina
29	Jeff Cothran	FB	6-1	249	2	Ohio State
30	Chris Shelling	CB	5-10	180	R	Auburn
31	Darryl Williams	S	6-0	191	4	Miami (Fla.)
35	Sam Shade	S	6-1	191	R	Alabama
36	James Joseph	RB	6-2	222	5	Auburn
37	Leonard Wheeler	S/CB	5-11	189	4	Troy State
38	Jason Burns	RB	5-7	195	R	Wisconsin
43	Mike Brim	CB	6-0	192	8	Virginia Union
50	James Francis	LB	6-5	252	6	Baylor
55	Andre Collins	LB	6-1	231	6	Penn State
56	Ricardo McDonald	LB	6-2	235	4	Pittsburgh
57	Kevin Jefferson	LB	6-2	232	2	Lehigh
58	Steve Tovar	LB	6-3	244	3	Ohio State
59	Greg Truitt	LS	6-0	235	2	Penn State
61	Melvin Tuten	T	6-6	305	R	Syracuse
62	Todd Kalis	G	6-6	296	8	Arizona State
63	Joe Walter	T	6-7	292	11	Texas Tech
64	Bruce Kozerski	T/G	6-4	287	12	Holy Cross
65	Derrick Brilz	C	6-3	287	9	Oregon State
67	Kimo Von Oelhoffen	DT	6-4	300	2	Boise State
70	Artie Smith	DE	6-4	285	3	Louisiana Tech
72	Scott Brumfield	G	6-8	320	3	BYU
75	Anthony Brown	T	6-6	310	R	Utah
77	Trent Pollard	G	6-4	330	2	Eastern Washington
79	Kevin Sargent	T	6-6	284	4	Eastern Washington
80	Ramondo Stallings	DE	6-7	285	2	San Diego State
81	David Dunn	WR	6-3	210	R	Fresno State
82	Carl Pickens	WR	6-2	206	4	Tennessee
84	Tony McGee	TE	6-3	246	3	Michigan
86	Darnay Scott	WR	6-1	180	2	Purdue
87	Troy Sadowski	TE	6-5	250	7	Georgia
88	Derek Ware	TE	6-2	255	4	Central State (Okla.)
89	Jeff Querry	WR	6-0	165	7	Millikin
90	Gerald Collins	LB	6-2	250	R	Vanderbilt
91	Brett Wallerstedt	LB	6-1	240	3	Arizona State
92	John Copeland	DE	6-3	286	3	Alabama
93	Ty Parten	DE	6-4	272	3	Arizona
95	Keith Rucker	DT	6-4	332	4	Ohio Wesleyan
98	Todd Kelly	DE	6-2	259	3	Tennessee
99	Dan Wilkinson	DT	6-5	313	2	Ohio State

STARTING LINEUPS



WHEN THE DOLPHINS HAVE THE BALL

WHEN THE BENGALS HAVE THE BALL

Countdown to Kickoff

MIAMI DOLPHINS vs. CINCINNATI BENGALS

GAME FACTS

- DATE Oct. 1, 1995
- TIME 1 p.m. EDT
- SITE Riverfront Stadium
- ATTENDANCE 50,000

THE SERIES

The Dolphins lead 11-3 and have won the last seven meetings, including the last three in Cincinnati. The teams have met once in the playoffs, with the Dolphins winning 34-16 following the 1973 season. The teams are meeting for the second consecutive year, the first time that has happened since 1977-78.

LAST MEETING

Dan Marino threw a pair of touchdown passes and the Dolphins defense forced five turnovers (three interceptions and two fumbles) as Miami prevailed 23-7 in a nationally televised Sunday night affair that featured the first confrontation between Don and David Shula. Cincinnati jumped out to a quick 7-0 lead when David Klingler hit Darnay Scott with a 51-yard touchdown pass, but it was all Dolphins after that. Pete Stoyanovich kicked three field goals for Miami.

CONNECTIONS

Bengals head coach Dave Shula is the son of Dolphins coach Don Shula and a former assistant with the Dolphins from 1982-88. Dolphins safety Louis Oliver spent last season with the Bengals after leaving Miami as an unrestricted free agent.

WHEN THE DOLPHINS HAVE THE BALL

The Bengals have assembled a lot of talent on defense the last few years — No. 1 picks Dan Wilkinson, James Francis, John Copeland and Darryl Williams, to name a few — but the results have been slow in coming. The Dolphins have made a concerted effort to try to establish a running game early in the season and there's no reason to think they won't be able to do so against the Bengals. Controlling mammoth linemen Wilkinson and Keith Rucker is the key for the Dolphins to have success on the ground. If the Dolphins can give Dan Marino time, he figures to have some success throwing against a secondary with few proven players.

Last Week

Doug Pelfrey just missed a 49-yard field goal attempt with under two minutes left as the Bengals lost for the first time this season, 24-21 at Seattle. Carl Pickens (22 yards) and Darnay Scott (88) caught touchdown passes for the Bengals, who also got a 17-yard interception return for a touchdown from Roger Jones. Quarterback Jeff Blake threw for 286 yards in a losing effort.

PLAYERS TO WATCH



CARL PICKENS

A second-round pick in 1992, Pickens emerged as one of the top wide receivers in the AFC last year when he set a Bengals record with 11 touchdown catches and tied another with 71 receptions.

He got off to a solid start this season as well, with five catches in each of the first two games. Against Jacksonville, he gained 102 yards receiving and scored on a 68-yard play.

Pickens isn't particularly fast, but he's got great height (6-2) and will make the acrobatic catch.



DAN WILKINSON

The first overall pick in the 1994 draft, Wilkinson didn't exactly dominate as a rookie, but he began making strides late last season and has continued that trend this year.

Wilkinson, who had two sacks in a Week 2 victory over Jacksonville, is only 22, so he has plenty of time to develop.

The man they call "Big Daddy" has great quickness for someone 6-4, 313 pounds. In fact, his weight appears to be the only thing that could keep him away from greatness.

KEY MATCHUPS

The Bengals pass rush vs. the Dolphins offensive line: Cincinnati has made life miserable for opposing quarterbacks so far this season, but the Bengals haven't faced an offensive line nearly as good as Miami's yet.

The Dolphins defensive line vs. the Bengals offensive line: The Dolphins have been downright dominating up front in the early going, which doesn't bode well for Cincinnati. The Bengals offensive line is among the weakest in the AFC year in and year out.

Bengals wide receivers Carl Pickens and Darnay Scott vs. the Dolphins secondary: The Bengals' young receiving tandem is among the best in the NFL and could give Troy Vincent and J.B. Brown a tough time. Both Scott and Pickens possess great size and the ability to get deep.

STAT OF THE WEEK

SEPTEMBER TO REMEMBER

The Bengals in September since 1991

1991	Ind.	L, 9-6
Den. L, 45-14	Pitt.	L, 34-7
Hou. L, 30-7	Sea.	L, 19-10
Cleve. L, 14-13		1994
Wash. L, 34-27	Cleve.	L, 28-20
	S.D.	L, 27-10
1992		
Sea. W, 21-3	N.E.	L, 31-28
Raid. W, 24-21	Hou.	L, 20-13
G.B. L, 24-23		1995
Minn. L, 42-7	Ind.	W, 24-21
	Jax.	W, 24-17
1993		
Cleve. L, 27-14	Sea.	

WHEN THE BENGALS HAVE THE BALL

The Bengals had high hopes coming into the season because they expected No. 1 overall pick Ki-Jana Carter to give them a complement to their outstanding wide receiver corps. But Carter's injury was a major setback and it left the running game in the hands of former 1,000-yard rusher Harold Green, who hasn't done much in the last couple of years, and former Chargers backup Eric Bieniemy. The bottom line is that Cincinnati will have to throw to win, which isn't great news for the health of quarterback Jeff Blake, an explosive but erratic thrower. Tight end Tony McGee has emerged as another target for Blake, but Cincy won't be dangerous offensively unless the line improves.

THE COACHES

DON SHULA

Dolphins coach Don Shula is in his 26th season in Miami, his 33rd overall. He entered the season as the NFL's all-time winningest coach, with 338 career victories. Shula is also the only coach who has gone to six Super Bowls.



DAVE SHULA

In his fourth season as head coach of the Bengals, the 36-year-old Shula remains the youngest head coach in the league. Shula, who turned down an offer to coach the Eagles in 1986, entered the season with an 11-37 coaching record.



Last Word

Dan is freakishly strong. The far end of the curve of the human race.

— STRENGTH COACH KIM WOOD
ON DAN WILKINSON

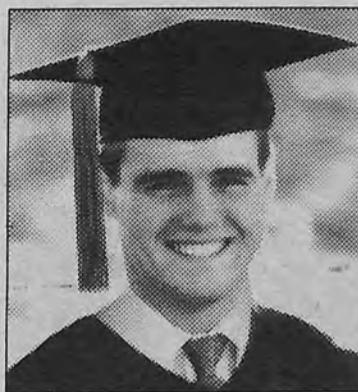
1995 DOLPHINS SCHEDULE**PRESEASON**

Aug. 4	JACKSONVILLE	L, 24-21
Aug. 11	at Atlanta	L, 37-0
Aug. 19	WASHINGTON	W, 27-13
Aug. 25	vs. Tampa Bay at Orlando	L, 24-17

REGULAR SEASON

Sept. 3	NEW YORK JETS	W, 52-14
Sept. 10	at New England	W, 20-3
Sept. 18	PITTSBURGH	W, 23-10
Sept. 24	BYE	
Oct. 1	at Cincinnati	1 p.m. NBC
Oct. 8	INDIANAPOLIS	4 p.m. NBC
Oct. 15	at New Orleans	4 p.m. NBC
Oct. 22	at New York Jets	1 p.m. NBC
Oct. 29	BUFFALO	4 p.m. NBC
Nov. 5	at San Diego	8 p.m. ESPN
Nov. 12	NEW ENGLAND	1 p.m. NBC
Nov. 20	SAN FRANCISCO	9 p.m. ABC
Nov. 26	at Indianapolis	1 p.m. NBC
Dec. 3	ATLANTA	1 p.m. FOX
Dec. 11	KANSAS CITY	9 p.m. ABC
Dec. 17	at Buffalo	1 p.m. NBC
Dec. 24	at St. Louis	4 p.m. NBC

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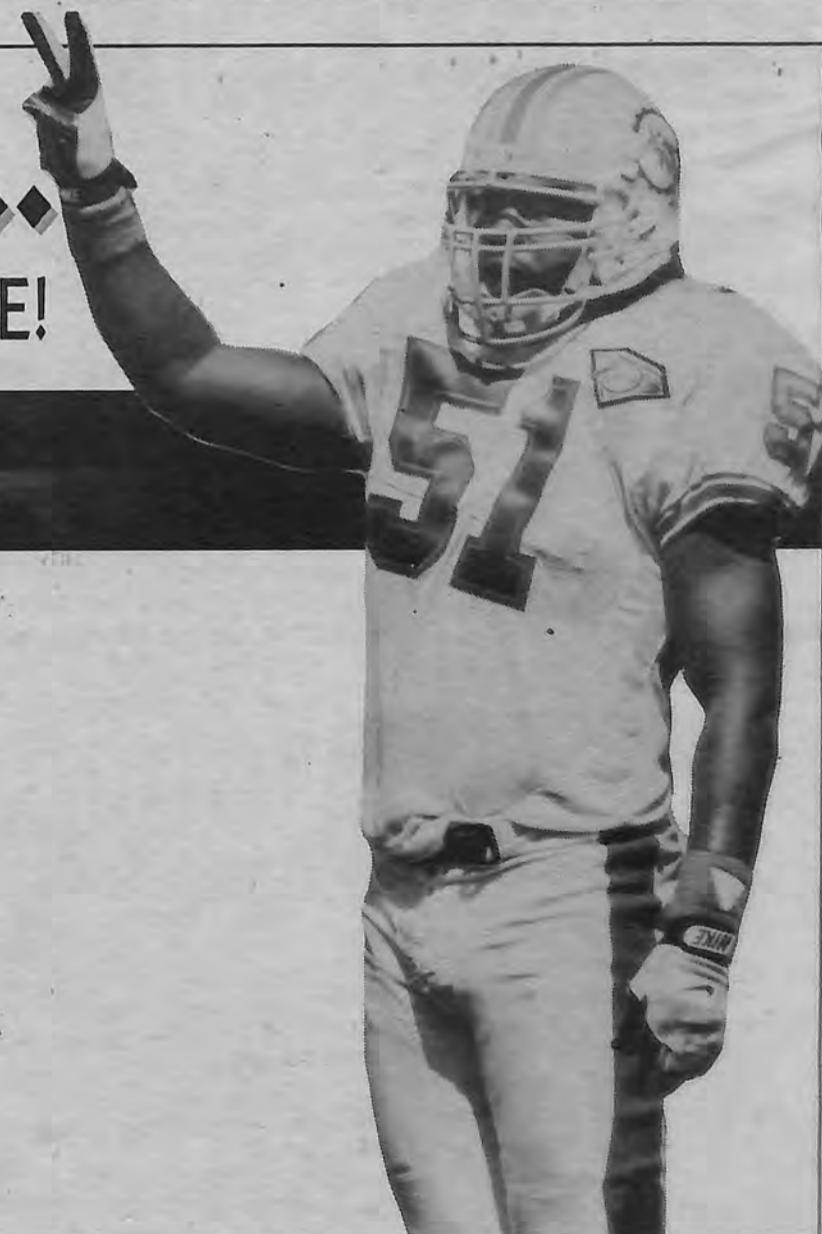
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NFL Notes

Football frenzy hits St. Louis

Amid the jugglers, stilt-walkers and baton twirlers entertaining outside Busch Stadium in St. Louis to celebrate the return of pro football was a fan dressed in a tattered, red T-shirt.

"(Ph. . .) the Phoenix Cardinals," the T-shirt said.

Steve Schoenfeld

Arizona Republic

Jim Gassner of St. Louis has been wearing that shirt since Cardinals owner Bill Bidwill announced after the 1987 season that the team was moving.

"I made it myself," Gassner said. "I should have put up a booth down here and sold 10,000."

Bidwill was across the country in sunny Arizona, but he was on the mind of many at the St. Louis Rams' home opener.

One fan waved a sign that said, "Thank you Phoenix. Welcome St. Louis Rams." Another sign told Bidwill to "Ram it."

"Now, St. Louis has a team without Bidwill in charge," fan **Mike Leiber** said. "We've been waiting for that since he left."

Since the Cardinals left, the city on the mighty Mississippi has thought several times it had a team to replace them. But each time they were teased, somebody pulled the artificial turf rug out from under them.

Not until last April, when NFL owners finally approved the Rams' move from Anaheim, Calif., to St. Louis were the fans convinced pro football was back. But even then, the team played all four preseason games on the road and the regular season opener at Green Bay.

A record crowd of 59,935 was on hand, a shocking development for Rams players, who are used to play in empty Anaheim Stadium.

"Everyone was just jumping around, dancing in the aisles, having a party," defensive tackle **D'Marco Farr** said. "I'm used to people at other stadiums doing that. We really do have a home now."

And St. Louis had an undefeated team after two games. The 17-13 victory over the New Orleans Saints gave the Rams their first 2-0 start since 1989 and their first two-game winning streak since '91.

Already, some are delirious, and not just those who spent \$4,500 for private seat licenses, the one-time fee that gives fans the right to own season tickets.

After the game, a St. Louis TV reporter asked Rams owner **Georgia Frontiere** whether she was thinking about being in the Super Bowl.

Frontiere had the good sense not to answer the question. Maybe she learned her lesson from 1989 when she told a San Francisco 49ers executive she hoped the two NFC West teams could meet in the Super Bowl.

They couldn't and cannot meet in Super Bowl XXX on Jan. 28 in Tempe, Ariz., Bidwill's turf.

"My heart is just exploding," Frontiere said of the reception in St. Louis. "The fans in St. Louis



Running back Jerome Bettis helped the Rams celebrate the return of football to St. Louis with a victory over New Orleans that gave the team its first 2-0 start since 1989.

Digest Photo/TIM ALEXANDER

are just incredible. It's like giving birth to a new era."

In October, the Rams are supposed to move to the \$260 million Trans World Dome. Bidwill, meanwhile, is stuck in Sun Devil Stadium, which he hates.

"The first game we have in our new stadium, I ought to put on a bed sheet with the sign, 'Hey, Bidwill, what have you got?'"

Getting the boot

Denver Broncos guard **Mark Schlereth** can understand why the Washington Redskins have crashed and burned since Coach **Joe Gibbs** left three years ago.

There are only seven players left from the team that beat Buffalo, 37-24, in Super Bowl XXVI, which explains why the team has gone 16-32 since.

"I don't think you (should) get rid of your work-ethic guys and character guys and bring in guys that might not have that," Schlereth said before the Broncos played the Redskins in Week Three. "You need a certain amount of character, a certain amount of work-ethic guys to teach young players how to play."

"You don't let go of guys like **Art Monk** and **Earnest Byner** and **Charles Mann**, guys that are going to show you what it means to play in the NFL."

Schlereth remains bitter about how his Redskins career ended. First, they asked him to take a \$150,000 pay cut. Then they took away his starting guard position and told him they didn't want him back.

"You don't tell me during the preseason that if you're starting, we won't touch your pay, and then two days before the first game, come in and say, 'If you don't take this pay cut, we're going to release you.'

"You don't tell a guy one thing and then do another thing. That's just not the way to run a business. I don't care what business you're in. I don't think you run your business like that."

Obsession

The Raiders wanted to show in Week Three they could beat the Kansas City Chiefs, who had won 11 of the previous 13 meetings between the teams.

How serious were the Raiders about winning?

Raiders coach **Mike White** didn't participate in a conference call with Kansas City reporters on Wednesday before the game. White gave them a 12-minute taped statement, not wanting to talk because former Raiders coach **Art Shell** is the Chiefs offensive line coach.

That was only one of the shenanigans the al-

See NFL NOTES, page 20

NFL NOTES, from page 19

ways-paranoid Raiders pulled. They barred a *Sports Illustrated* reporter from their training facility for being a "subversive."

White also didn't talk all week to reporters who cover the Raiders.

As a result of the Raiders' actions, the Pro Football Writers of America asked the NFL to fine the team and have the fines count against the club's salary cap.

Smart business

When the 49ers cut Tim McDonald's salary in the preseason to \$1.25 million from \$2.35 million, the new contract was filled with incentives.

One incentive was a \$650,000 bonus, and there were 16 ways McDonald could earn it.

He earned it in two games by returning two interceptions for touchdowns, 52 yards against New Orleans and 13 against Atlanta.

"I wanted to pick out the hardest one and show 'em I could make it in two weeks," McDonald said.

Sad sacks

The expansion Carolina Panthers gave up 12 sacks in the first two games, an NFL high.

Jacksonville, the other expansion team, allowed 11, including seven to Cincinnati.

So it's no wonder that Jaguars quarterback Steve Beuerlein is out for a couple of weeks with a knee injury.

"The offensive line always is the place you struggle first," said Joe Wooley, Cardinals assistant to the general manager. "You always have a hard time putting a line together and none of



Tim McDonald

those guys had ever played a snap together."

Bloody gloves

Only Tampa Bay coach Sam Wyche could find his way into the O.J. Simpson trial.

Prosecutor Marcia Clark introduced two photographs and an NBC videotape of a Simpson interview with Wyche and his then-Bengals quarterback, Boomer Esiason, before a 1991 playoff game.

Cincinnati photographer Bill Renken took the pictures 4½ years ago when Wyche coached the Bengals.

Wyche was in his office recently watching the trial when he looked up and saw himself standing next to Simpson.

"I happened to be watching and was obviously very surprised to see that interview with O.J.," Wyche said. "I do remember the game and the interview."

Short shots

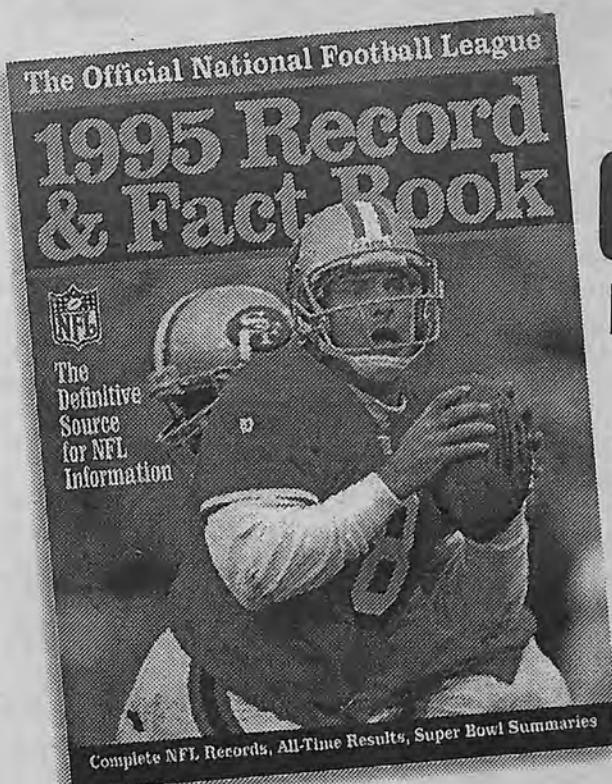
A Philadelphia Eagles fan, discussing controversial running back Ricky Watters on Philadelphia radio station WIP, "We thought we were getting Emmitt Smith. We got Emmett Kelly."

... In the past three games between the 49ers and Atlanta Falcons in San Francisco, the 49ers have outscored them, 133-27.

What a disappointment Herschel Walker was for the New York Giants in the first two games. He ran for only 8 yards on five carries and caught five passes for another 37 yards.

... Cardinals coach Buddy Ryan deserves congratulations for ruining quarterback Dave Krieg. A year ago, Krieg completed 61.8 percent of his passes, threw for 14 touchdowns and was intercepted only three times while playing for the Detroit Lions. He had a quarterback rating of 101.7. In his first two games with the Cardinals, Krieg had a league-worst 35.9 passing rating, had completed only 51 percent of his passes and had thrown only one touchdown pass and five interceptions in six quarters.

... Jesse Sapolu, 49ers offensive lineman on Dallas owner Jerry Jones' signing of All-Pro cornerback Deion Sanders, "We know there's a man out there trying to destroy our team."



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Jerry Jones' moves a big deal

Sterling Sharpe spent his entire life catching footballs. Now he is spending a year away from the game following neck surgery, learning the media business from the inside at ESPN.



**HANK
GOLDBERG**
WQAM RADIO

Deion this and Deion that. Last week's rumor was that he and Eugene Parker, his agent, weren't telling all about upcoming ankle surgery. The Denver Broncos, in pursuit of the \$30 million corner until the last day, supposedly were not told about it. But after the signing, Dallas boss Jerry Jones professed to know, stating that the Cowboys' medical staff had examined him.

Still, when Part Time was house-hunting in Dallas on Thursday, he just happened to stop by the Doc's for an MRI to see if the arthroscopic process was still necessary. Hmmm.

Many ramifications remain to the signing. For example, Troy Vincent, the Miami cornerback who should be headed for the Pro Bowl, is a transition player in his contract year. That status entitles him to, at least, be paid among the top 10 at that position.

You would suspect a windfall. But the Sanders deal is back-loaded to the extent that he is being paid a mere \$2 million per for the next three years.

Those who believe that San Francisco could not have won a title without P.T. (great initials for this story) will find out if they are right in January. The surgery may keep

As in most sports departments, the conversation centered on Deion Sanders, and Sharpe just smiled and said, "All of these years, I thought that Deion was a great football player. Now I find out he's just an expensive one!"



Jerry Jones didn't make the other owners happy with his huge deals with Nike and Pepsi.

Digest Photo/KEN KEIDEL

him from the Nov. 12 reunion with the Niners in Dallas. Wouldn't it be nice to see the tight shot of Jerry as the clock ticks away the season and he's on the short end?

Meanwhile, Jerry and Part Time are having their first fight, according to reports, and it's over the necessity for surgery.

Emmitt Smith is another voice to be heard from. He'll want to be rewarded at the P.T. level. Now Jerry's momma didn't raise a fool. Emmitt's

four-year pact at \$14 million makes him an unrestricted free agent in 1997, but it contains a right-of-first-refusal clause. On the other hand, Smith will want to be taken care of well before the expiration date.

Jones' spending spree, and its accompanying deals with the likes of Nike and Pepsi, which have been made privately with competitors to NFL Properties' signators, have stirred the other owners. Tuesday, they are meeting in Atlanta to take

up the issue along with Raiders boss Al Davis, who was an issue when Jerry was a student at Arkansas.

Some would like to throw the book at Jones, but they aren't certain what constitutes the book. Come to think of it, 300 million green pieces of paper make a pretty healthy book, as the league decided to file suit against the Cowboys owner — who, by the way, was not surprised at the move.

The league does business with Coca-Cola. The Cowboys sold their stadium naming rights to Pepsi. Since Jones owns the stadium, that is within the by-laws. He simply chose to flaunt it.

The Nike situation is different. So is the perception created by all of this. Syndicated talk host Ted Green calls the franchise "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas." America's team is fast becoming the team America loves to hate.

That shouldn't bother Jerry; not as long as his picture turns up daily on the sports pages; not as long as there is a microphone under his chin; not as long as a network gives him and a sponsorship partner air time.

Actually, except for the frequency in firing employees, in some ways he reminds of George Steinbrenner when he came into baseball, springing for huge contracts and just generally playing the maverick.

Revenue-sharing has worked for the NFL for over 30 years. Ask some hockey proprietors if they would like to have it.

Hopefully not, but four years from now, we could find ourselves yearning for the Super Bowl, but instead hearing about how the owners are losing too much money. They can't pay the players. Small-market teams can't make it. The players want the salary cap eliminated.

And we can think back to this month in 1995. And thank Jerry.

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OVERVIEW

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Dear Overview:

I just finished watching the Dolphins manhandle the Steelers, arguably the most physical team in football. Why am I so angry? Our defense almost pitched another shutout, only to suffer through a fourth quarter where our offensive strategy was to run out as much clock as we can in three downs and punt. Then we play prevent defense against a "World League" quarterback for an entire quarter and let him march down the field on two consecutive drives.

I was so excited at the end of the third quarter, only to be depressed at the end of the game as I watched our defensive players look totally broken down on the sidelines. Is this how we reward their efforts and pick up their spirits going into a bye week? Is this the kind of coaching and motivation that is going to win the Super Bowl? On this week's "Report Card," grade the coaches and give them an "F." GO FINS!

Scott Lorton
New Orleans, La.

Dear Overview:

Having just watched the completion of the Dolphins' 23-10 manhandling of Pittsburgh, I was compelled to write.

I have been a fan of the Fins since 1977 and a Tom Olivadotti basher since 1990. I was one of the many legions who complained that "... his defenses were too much read and react" or "he's not aggressive enough, he needs to blitz more."

However, based on the way the defense has stepped up to the forefront in every phase of the game this season, Olivadotti deserves a tremendous amount of credit. From the blowout of the Jets to the outstanding defense inside the red zone against the Patriots to the big plays made against the Steelers, the Dolphins D has set the tone of each game.

So maybe all my previous derision of Olivadotti has been wrong. It might not have been his defensive philosophies. It might have just been that he needed the talents of a Troy Vincent and a Bryan Cox to make them work, instead of an Eric Kumerow and a John Bosa.

Joe Pickton
Bedminster, N.J.

Dear Overview:

The Dolphins owe their fans one big apology. Their lackluster attempts to sign Deion Sanders bring back familiar memories of the frugal Robbies. The guy said he wanted to wear aqua. Let me tell you why he's a Cowboy.

First of all, Deion was correct. The Dolphins lied to their fans. We said that we were "interested in Deion if he was interested in us." Wrong attitude! To land Deion, you must court him! They thought Deion would come to them. You gotta realize Deion has a huge ego and that ego

must always be massaged. Jerry Jones and Carmen Policy were playing to his ego every day.

Secondly, Eddie Jones had no business representing the Dolphins. This deal was way over his head. Wayne Huizenga should have dealt with Deion and his agent himself. It was a slap in the face to Deion's ego that Wayne was not courting him directly. It made him feel that the Dolphins were not really serious. You see, Deion is an entertainer who just happens to be a great football player. Wayne should have courted Deion and used Blockbuster as his stepping stone to the world of entertainment. He should have talked big picture. He should have sold Deion on how Miami and South Beach are becoming the Hollywood of the East.

The bottom line is that the Dolphins had no intentions of paying Deion that kind of money. They were hoping that Deion placed more value on wanting to catch passes from Marino than he did on the cash. Big mistake!

Roger Gould
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Editor's note: You couldn't be more wrong. Deion's demands far exceeded his abilities and the repercussions because of the high salary amount would have been devastating.

Dear Overview:

As much as I enjoyed our "coming out" party versus the Jets, my concern was this: as Dolphins fans, we all know only too well how devastating injuries can turn great enthusiasm into a season of disappointment. With this game virtually under wraps in the late-third or early-fourth quarter, many star players either remained in or continued to rotate into the game up until the end. The reasons I considered were: getting extra work in, playoff tiebreaking points or protecting Kosar (referring to the offensive linemen).

The fact is NO reason is good enough to needlessly compromise our star players for "mop up duty!" Cris Collinsworth noticed it as well. This is a senseless tempt of fate. With all our quality depth, MORE stars should have been replaced. This practice cannot continue.

Sam Escudero
West Orange, N.J.

Editor's note: The Dolphins did substitute liberally against the Jets. Dan Marino, for example, sat out the entire fourth quarter.

Dear Overview:

Here's the scenario: It's Sunday, Jan. 28, 1996, in Tempe, Ariz., and the two best teams in football meet in Super Bowl XXX — the Miami Dolphins and the Dallas Cowboys. Two things happen:

- 1) Irving Fryar toasts Deion Sanders for a 75-yard touchdown catch.
- 2) Troy Aikman has a pass intended for Deion intercepted by Troy Vincent. While Deion, play-

ing offense, tries to tackle Troy, Louis Oliver blindsides Deion and knocks him out of the game and the Dolphins go on to win the Super Bowl! It could happen and will happen!

Who needs "Prime Time" when we have "All the Time" (Troy Vincent)? See you in January.

P.S. Happy Belated Birthday, Dan (Sept. 15)

Ernesto D'Addario
New York, N.Y.

Dear Overview:

For all the loyal Fins fans of Central New York state who attended the club formerly known as "Bleachers" for our game gatherings, the place has now changed its name to "Tahoe's" at the exact same Liverpool, N.Y., location.

In fact, they even have a special oversized screen and full stereo surround sound room just for us. Go Fins.

Christopher Jones
Syracuse, N.Y.

Dear Overview:

I am glad that the Dolphins front office and Coach Shula didn't fall for The Deion Con. Mortgaging the bright future of this team on him would have been a sin. I think our secondary will have the respect of everyone before the season is through. If Deion Sanders is so great, why doesn't he take the Jets to the Super Bowl?

Gene Sottile
Kingston, N.Y.

Dear Overview:

I'm a big fan of the Miami Dolphins and, believe me, it isn't easy being a female football fan in Germany. It's hard to find someone who understands I really love this game and especially this great team, the Miami Dolphins. Well, the reason I wrote is that I also think this year will be the Dolphins' year. They're ready to finally win the Super Bowl, with a completely healthy team.

Sandra Frohbose
Offenburg, Germany

Dear Overview:

It's hard to believe after so many winning seasons, two Super Bowl victories and the most wins ever, that some people want J.J. to coach the Dolphins.

Don Shula is the heart and sole of this organization. No one wants to win more than he. The fans should appreciate the loyalty, work ethic and class that he brings to a team he helped build. J.J. is a fine coach, but when you have the best, there's no point looking anywhere else.

Evan Shear
Beverly Hills, Calif.



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82 ATLANTA FALCONS	
83 KANSAS CITY CHIEFS P-1:00PM C-3:00PM E-4:00PM	
84 CLEVELAND BROWNS	4
85 HOUSTON OILERS P-1:00PM C-3:00PM E-4:00PM	
86 CINCINNATI BENGALS	6
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